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T H E
G R A C E S:

A

P O E T I C A L E P I S T L E.

F R O M A

G E N T L E M A N T O H I S S O N.

L O N D O N:

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T H E G R A C E S:

A

P O E T I C A L E P I S T L E.

P R I D E of my youth, and Comfort of my age !

To thee I consecrate this useful page.

Vers'd in the nicest arts of human kind,

To thee thy Parent pours forth all his mind ;

And be it thine to treasure in thy heart

The grand *arcana*, which I now impart.

As Health derives its most important charge,
More from the smaller vessels than the large,

B

On

On small events so man's success depends,
 By these alone he gains the greatest ends ;
 And as he keeps this maxim, or forsakes,
 A Trifle marrs him, or a Trifle makes.

Court then the Graces, court ! as I have done ;
 This rule adopt, or quit the name of Son.
 This I will hollow constant in thy ear,
 As loud as *Hotspur* hollow'd *Mortimer* :
 I would not keep a cat, or feed a bird,
 That pip'd ungraceful, or ungraceful purr'd*.

Let strict *Attention* all your acts direct,
 It wins Applause, as it denotes Respect.

* The graceful manner of speaking is particularly what I shall always hollow in your ear, as *Hotspur* hollow'd *Mortimer* to *Henry* the fourth, and like him, I have aimed to have a Starling taught to say, “*speak distinctly and gracefully,*” and send him you to replace your loss of the unfortunate Matzell, who by the way, I am told, spoke his language *distinctly and graciously*.

Lord Chesterfield's Letter to his Son, page 305. 4to. edit. 1st. Vol.

Observe

Observe it in the most minute degree,
As well when *out of*, as *in* company.
Observe it even in the SHRINE OF EASE,
An error there the GODDESS may displease.
Learn what materials will your purpose fit,
And next enquire the *Quantum sufficit* ;
That *quantum* then in even folds dispose,
And wipe as cleanly, as you'd wipe your Nose.
In ev'ry circumstance, in ev'ry place,
The ease of Nature asks the ease of Grace.
What pity 'tis ! a Gentleman can't send
This vulgar deed his Proxy to attend.
'Tis quite *beneath* the dignity of man,
So prithee, Child ! avoid it---if you can ;
But if it prove an irksome, windy war,
And nought, but vent, can terminate the jar ;
Distinct and graceful, let th' explosion sound,
And fill with Harmony the sweet profound.

T H E G R A C E S.

Think not that Merit of itself can raise
Promotion's ladder, or the step of Praife*.
How came SIR FLETCHER in the Speaker's Chair !
Did Merit, or the Graces place him there.
Without the Graces what would THURLOE be!
THURLOE the Sage---a brief without a fee ;
If more polite, perhaps he might be CHIEF,
And then he'd have the Fee without the Brief.
Say ! was it Merit, like a blazing Star,
That first distinguish'd DUNNING at the Bar !
By Grace, and Attitude, the Prize he won,
For he and Grace, and Grace and he are one ;
And whilst his rapid energy alarms,
The *Lawyer* strikes us---but th' ADONIS charms.

* I must repeat it to you over and over again, that with all the knowledge which you may have at present, or hereafter acquire, and with all the merit that ever man had, if you have not a graceful address, &c. you will be nobody. Page 500, 1st. Vol.

To

To Justice BLACKSTONE now direct your eyes,
With him in parts what other Justice vies !
'Twas his to comment, his to analyze,
And draw the cobweb-curtain from our eyes ;
Each legal winding nicely to explore,
And give to RUFUS one sound Lawyer more.
But what of that ! he might have still retail'd
Inglorious Fees, had not his form prevail'd ;
His gracious form, by Nature fram'd to please,
Which robs ANTINOUS of half his ease.

To Phyfic now---that claims the second place.
SCHOMBERG has Skill, but PRINGLE has the Grace ;
And yet---but how I know not---I protest,
THAT Schomberg's universally careft ;
Hated perhaps---for taking NATURE's part---
By none, but the Professors of the ART.

Tho' BROMFIELD operates as quick as thought,
His Fame and Judgment would be set at nought

C

Did

Did not the sweetnes of his soft Addres,
 That graceful mode he carves with, more or less,
 Conduce to save his happy patient's life,
 And make him look with pleasure at his knife.

Thus with Divines. The multitude careſſ
 The Preacher of the most expert Addresſ.
 'Tis not the doctrine that the crowd revere,
 They go to please the eye, and not the ear ;
 Hundreds, in ſpite of thoſe who truly teach,
 'To ----- * flock, tho' PETERBOROUGH preach..

Think you (and this to CHATHAM I submit)
 That parts ſuperior rais'd the name of PITT !
 No--'twas that elegant, HANS STANLEY Ease,
 That manner soft, which could not fail to please ;
 That magic ſomething, which yet wants a name,
 And hands GREAT TALLBOY to immortal fame.

* The reader is desired to fill up this blank to his own mind.

Say !

Say ! was it parts (tho' WALPOLE ne'er had more)
That held up NORTH amidst a factious roar !
With cautious eye the steady helm he guides,
And o'er the sea of state triumphant rides.
Firm, as the solid rock, that nobly braves
The raving fury of the lashing waves,
He stands---and mocks, un-conscious of a shame,
The voice of Clamour, and the lies of Fame.
But did th' exertion of his parts alone
Give, or deserve the favour of the throne !
Tho' blest with Goodness both of Heart and Head,
That goodness had remain'd inert and dead,
His well-earn'd consequence would ne'er maintain,
Were he not HASLANG'D in the Graces train.

But now to more familiar rules I fall,
And beg you'll practise and observe e'm all..
When at the Play, be all alike serene,
Or at the tragic, or the comic scene.

Let Humour (**GARRICK** standing by her side)
With laughter loud plebeian mouths divide,
Whose ha! ha! ha's! the tender ear annoy.
Do thou disdain the coarse, unmeaning joy ;*
Nor ope your lips, but purely to disclose
How white your teeth, how accurate the rows.

When Tragedy puts on her fable stole,
Whose very looks convey her very soul ;
Whose words a murderer's repose defeat,
And make a *Nabob* shudder in his seat ;
Whose plaintive tones can melt the worthy breast,
That ever melts, when Merit is distrest;
Who calls forth tears, of tears a copious store
From fullen eyes, that never wept before ;

* You may often be seen to smile, but never heard to laugh, while you live. Frequent and loud laughter is the characteristic of folly and ill-manners. It is the manner in which the mob express their silly joy at silly things. In my mind there is nothing so illiberal and so ill-bred as audible laughter. Page 268.

Tears

Tears that do honour to the human heart,
And such as BARRY can at will impart ;
When such the sympathy (tho' ne'er so strong)
Ah ! catch not thou th' effusion of the throng ;
For if they see you shed one real tear,
The very men who shift the scenes will sneer.

Now lift attentive ! lift ! whilst I unfold
A secret, that in verse has ne'er been told.
All think they know it, but 'tis known to few,
That is, how best to buckle on your shoe ;
Tho' strong their judgment, and their fancy bright,
Ten do it wrong for one, who does it right.
On this side some, and some on that display
This useful ornament in awkward way.
But wiser thou ! observe nor that, nor this,
Say what men will, both methods are amis ;

The *medium* of the foot denotes the place,
Its proper fixture for external grace*.

With all his open manliness of mind,
Where solid sense, and sterling wit are join'd,
In life poor *Classic* never could advance,
The reason's plain---poor *Classic* could not dance.

How long in vain did learned JOHNSON toil !
And waste in busy thought the midnight oil :
Whose page the Critics ever must revere,
As long as genius is reputed dear,
Whose heart exults, or swells with honest rage,
As Vice, or Virtue marks the rising age ;
Whose nervous writings shook the trump of Fame,
Yet left him nothing but a deathless name.

* I am very glad you have received the diamond buckles safe. All I desire in return for them is, that they may be buckled even upon your foot, and that your stockings may not hide them.

But

But when the features of each grace he wore,
 And look'd as JOHNSON never look'd before,
 Then came the meed, that honourable gain,
 Which sheds such lustre over GEORGE's Reign,
 That meed, which no good man can wish remov'd,
 Hinted by BUTE, by MAJESTY approv'd.

Adieu! and let the Graces be your text*,
 But I'll be more explicit in my next:
 There will I teach thee, with a fire's concern,
 All that is proper for a son to learn:
 In pleasing segments how to pare your nails†,
 Segments must please, as long as taste prevails.
 The conduct of your breeches there make known,
 How best to pull 'em up, and let 'em down.

* The Graces, the Graces, remember the Graces. Page 390.

† The ends of your nails should be small segments of circles, &c. every time that you wipe your hands, rub the skin round your nails backwards, that it may not grow up and shorten your nails too much. Vol. II. page 60.

Teach thee to handle with peculiar grace,
The snuff-box, toothpick, and the toothpick-cafe,
And how to cut and eat a currant tart,
Nor let your napkin, or your chin have part.
Once more, my Child ! adieu ! Remember me,
And ne'er, O ne'er forget the GRACES THREE !
Hug 'em as close, as, when he goes to rest,
HILL hugs his graceful *Order* to his breast.

F I N I S.

